

**What is claimed is:**

1. A water-soluble polymer, which has a calcium ion  
scavengeability of not less than 0.40 and further has a clay dispersibility of  
not less than 0.50 in high-hardness water.

2. A water-soluble polymer according to claim 1, which comprises  
a water-soluble poly(carboxylic acid)-based polymer having a structural  
unit derived from a monoethylenically unsaturated monocarboxylic acid  
(or salt) monomer and/or a structural unit derived from a  
monoethylenically unsaturated dicarboxylic acid (or salt) monomer.

3. A water-soluble polymer according to claim 1, which comprises  
a polymer mixture including polymers A and B as essential components  
wherein the polymer A has a calcium ion scavengerability of not less than  
0.45 and wherein the polymer B has a clay dispersibility of not less than  
0.65 in high-hardness water, wherein the polymer mixture has physical  
properties such that the calcium ion scavengerability is not less than 0.40  
and that the clay dispersibility is not less than 0.60 in high-hardness  
water.

4. A water-soluble polymer according to claim 2, which comprises  
a polymer mixture including polymers A and B as essential components  
wherein the polymer A has a calcium ion scavengerability of not less than  
0.45 and wherein the polymer B has a clay dispersibility of not less than  
0.65 in high-hardness water, wherein the polymer mixture has physical  
properties such that the calcium ion scavengerability is not less than 0.40

and that the clay dispersibility is not less than 0.60 in high-hardness water.

5        5.    A water-soluble polymer according to claim 3, wherein the mixing ratio by weight of polymer A/polymer B is in the range of 20/80 to 95/5.

10       6.    A water-soluble polymer according to claim 4, wherein the mixing ratio by weight of polymer A/polymer B is in the range of 20/80 to 95/5.

15       7.    A detergent composition, which comprises the water-soluble polymer as recited in claim 1.

20       8.    A detergent composition, which comprises the water-soluble polymer as recited in claim 2.

25       9.    A detergent composition, which comprises the water-soluble polymer as recited in claim 3.

      10.   A detergent composition, which comprises the water-soluble polymer as recited in claim 4.

      11.   A detergent composition, which comprises the water-soluble polymer as recited in claim 5.

      12.   A detergent composition, which comprises the water-soluble

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polymer as recited in claim 6.

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